

leader fashion. At 1705 hrs about 25 birds flew into one tree and within 2-3 minutes became still and silent, apparently perched together about 5 m below the top of the tree. Owing to poor light I could not make out whether they perched in contact with one another, but all must have been within 1 or 2 m. The remainder of the flock distributed themselves in groups of 5-10 in the crowns of neighbouring trees, within 5 m of the top, all being settled by 1715 hrs. Official sunset was at 1710 hrs, but the sun had set well before that behind nearby mountains.

29 BABAR ROAD,
NEW DELHI 110 001,
December 18, 1978.

The first group to settle into their roost was preceded by one bird which gave a loud call "tea-cher" repeatedly from the roosting tree for about a minute. A few minutes after the group had entered the roost one bird left the tree and gave the "tea-cher" call briefly from an adjacent tree. One other bird followed it, but the rest remained where they were. There is some suggestion from this that certain birds may play a dominant role in directing the movements of the flock, at least when going to roost.

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12. DHAMAN (*PTYAS MUCOSUS*) AND PARAKEETS

In the aviary of this department, 40 parakeets (*Psittacula* sp.) were kept for experimental studies. On 14th August 1979 at 11.30 a.m. when we entered the aviary, we found a heavily fed Dhaman snake (*Ptyas mucosus*) of about 8 feet length. The snake

had entered the aviary after 3 p.m. on 13th August, probably through the gap between the doors. The snake had fed so heavily that it was unable to move easily. It was brought to the laboratory and dissected and four parakeets were removed from its stomach.

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